

How Do We Reach TRICARE Beneficiaries?



Director, Research & Analysis
TMA/Communications & Customer Service*

***This was a collaborative effort with HPA&E's Center for Healthcare Management Studies
and with contract support by WESTAT, Axiom and STI**





Overview

- Purpose
- Data collection
- August 2005 Survey findings
- Comparison of 2004 and 2005 findings



Purpose

- Gather information about our members' TRICARE information needs, sources, and preferences
- Basis for effective marketing and communication strategies



Survey Assessed

- Awareness of TRICARE information sources
- Primary sources used
- User assessment of information sources
 - Difficulty in using source
 - Satisfaction with access and value of information
- Communication preferences
- Market Reach of various communication methods



Survey Participants

- Sample frame consisted of married households
- Inpatient admission or ambulatory care encounter in three months prior to survey
- 3,625 completed interviews (~10 minutes)
 - 22% incorrect phone numbers
 - 88% cooperation of those reached
- User Groups:
 - Active duty (1,539)
 - Activated reservists (714)
 - Retirees under age 65 (692)
 - Retirees age 65+ (681)
- Results appropriately weighted to allow inter-group comparison



Top 3 Types of Information Sought (by household, by rank) From Pick List of 12

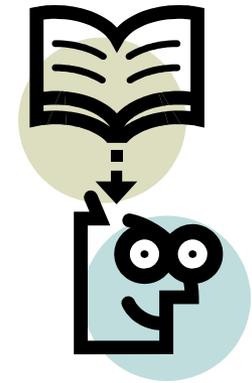
	Active Duty	Reserve component	Retirees under age 65	Retirees 65 and over
Scheduling an appointment	1 (64.9%)		2 (43.0%)	
Phone numbers of health care providers or MTFs	2 (55.0%)	1 (55.7%)	3 (42.1%)	
Referrals to specialist or other doctors	3 (51.2%)			
Benefit coverage for current beneficiaries		3 (50.1%)		
Billing or claims			1 (47.2%)	3 (26.8%)
MTFs in the area				
Finding a Primary Care Manager				
Enrollment/disenrollment in TRICARE		2 (52.7%)		
Prescription benefits				2 (28.8%)
Local pharmacies participating with TRICARE				1 (29.0%)
Benefit coverage for new family members				
Switching from one MTF to another				



Awareness of Information Sources

- 79.5% of households are aware of all **four** primary information source

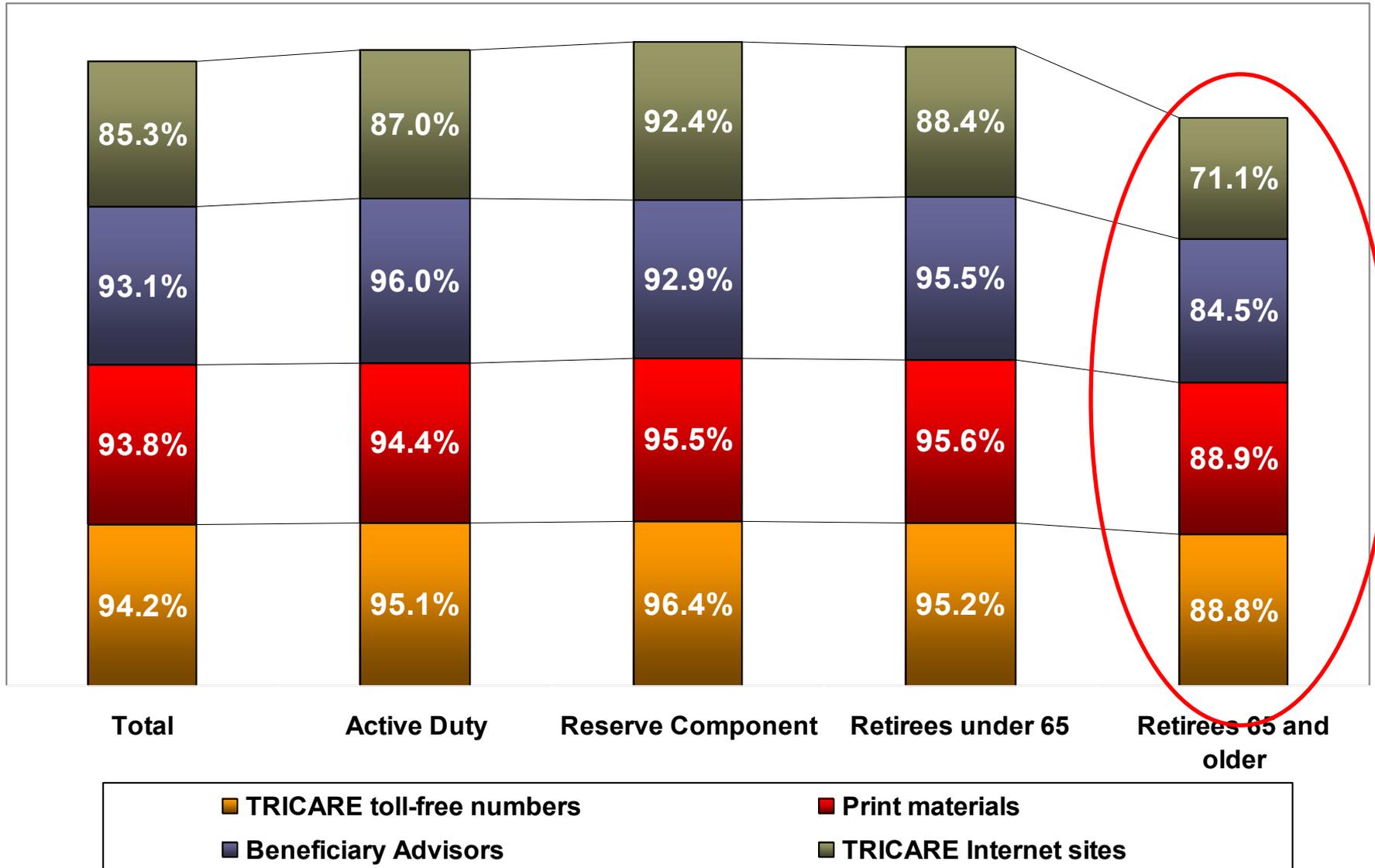
- TRICARE toll-free numbers (94.2%)
- Print materials from TRICARE (93.8%)
- Beneficiary advisors (93.1%)
- TRICARE Internet site (85.3%)



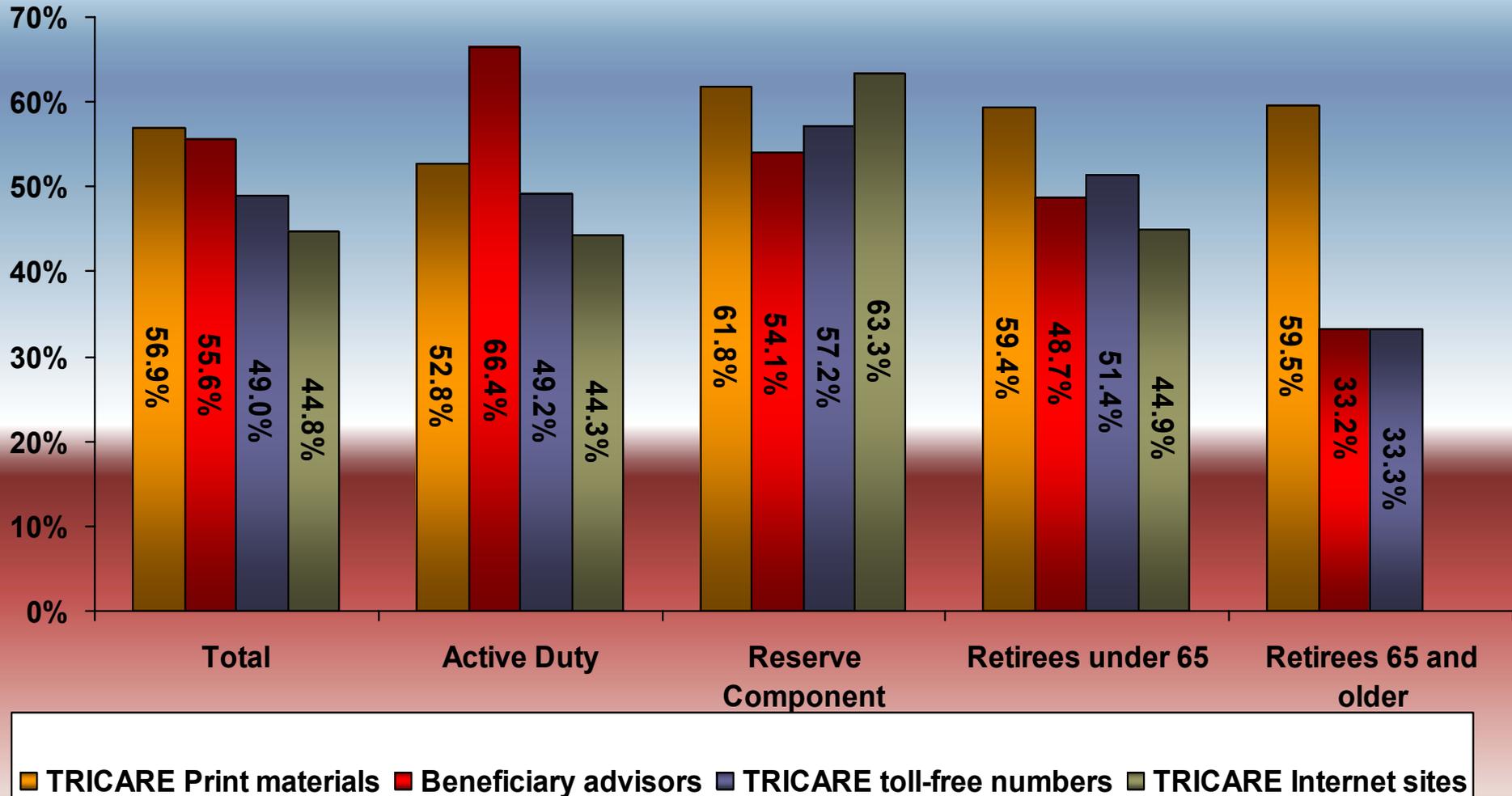
- Almost 83% have sought TRICARE info in past year
 - Nonseekers may know all they need to



Awareness of 4 TRICARE Information Sources



Sources Used in Past Year (from pick list of 16 examples)

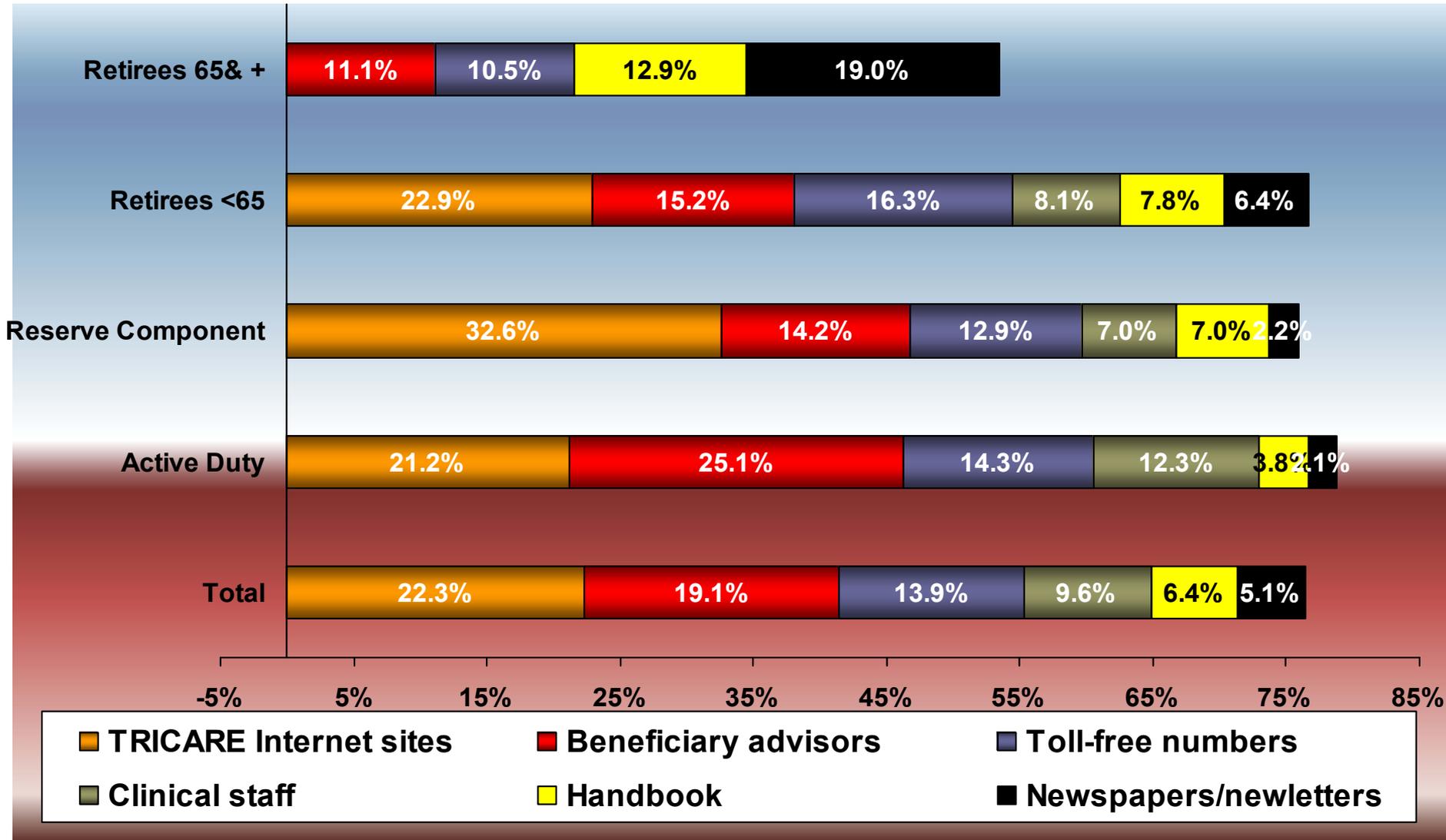




Other Sources of Information in Past Year

- Military newspaper or newsletter
 - Ranked 2nd among retirees 65 and older
- TRICARE doctors, nurses, or technicians at a military hospital or clinic
- Veterans' organization or military association
 - Ranked 3rd among retirees 65 and older

Cited as Primary Source of Information





Primary Sources of Information

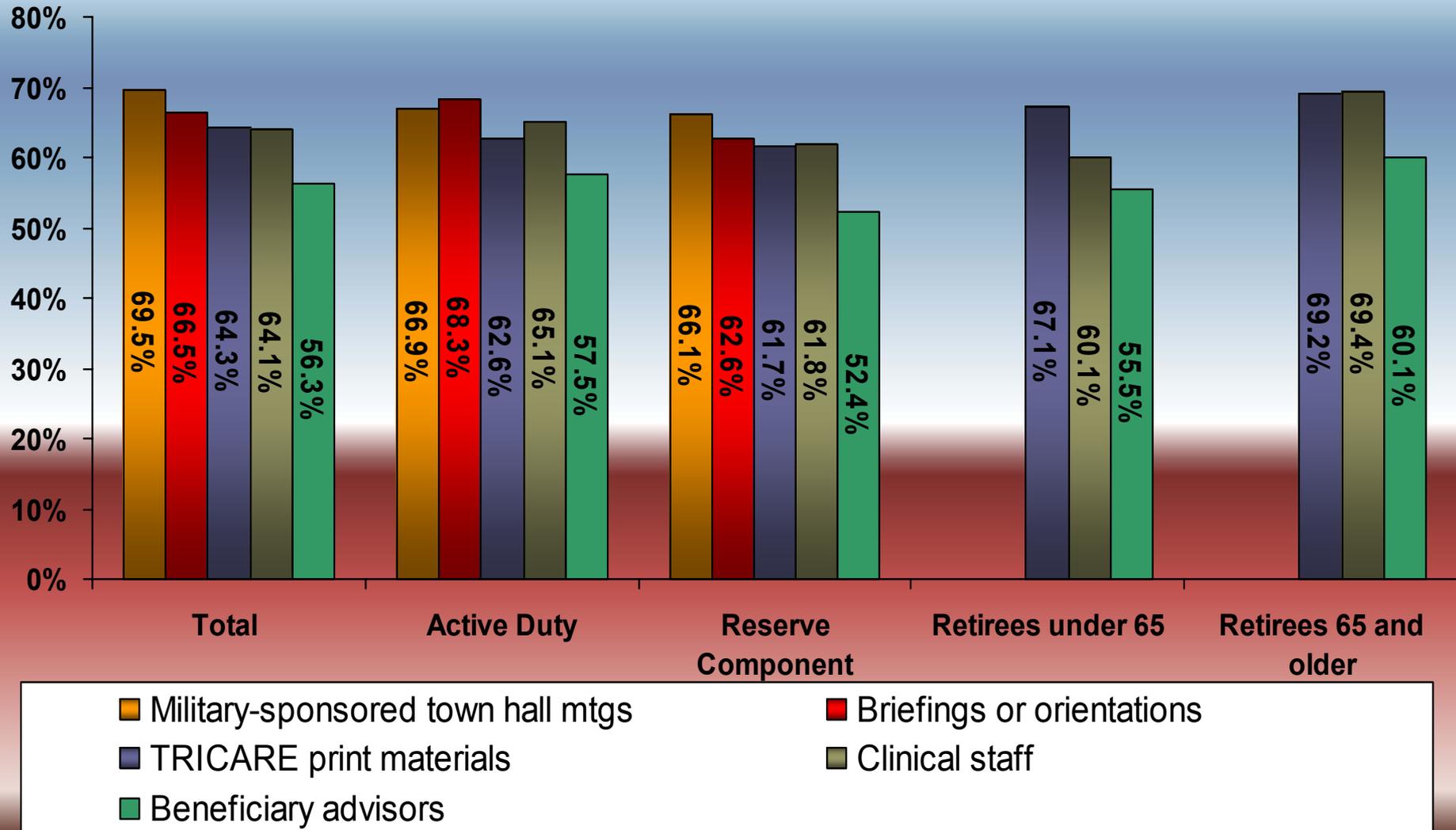
- Similar top 5 resources for 3 household types
 - Active Duty
 - Reserve Component
 - Retirees under age 65
- Retirees 65 and over
 - Military newspaper or newsletter
 - The TRICARE Handbook
 - Beneficiary advisors at service centers and MTFs
 - TRICARE toll-free numbers
 - TRICARE brochure
- Internet as the primary source
 - Reserve Component
 - Retirees under age 65



Getting TRICARE Information

- Top 5 sources households rated as “**easy**” or “**fairly easy**” to get information
 - Military sponsored town hall meetings on base (69.5%)
 - Briefing or orientation (66.5%)
 - Print materials (64.3%)
 - TRICARE doctors, nurses, or tech (64.1%)
 - Beneficiary advisors at service center and MTFs (56.3%)

Easy Sources of Information (Accessibility)





How Easy Is It to Get Information?

- 16% of households rated the service agents at toll-free call centers as “*not easy to get to*”
- 12.7% of retirees under 65 rate TRICARE website as “*not easy to get to*”



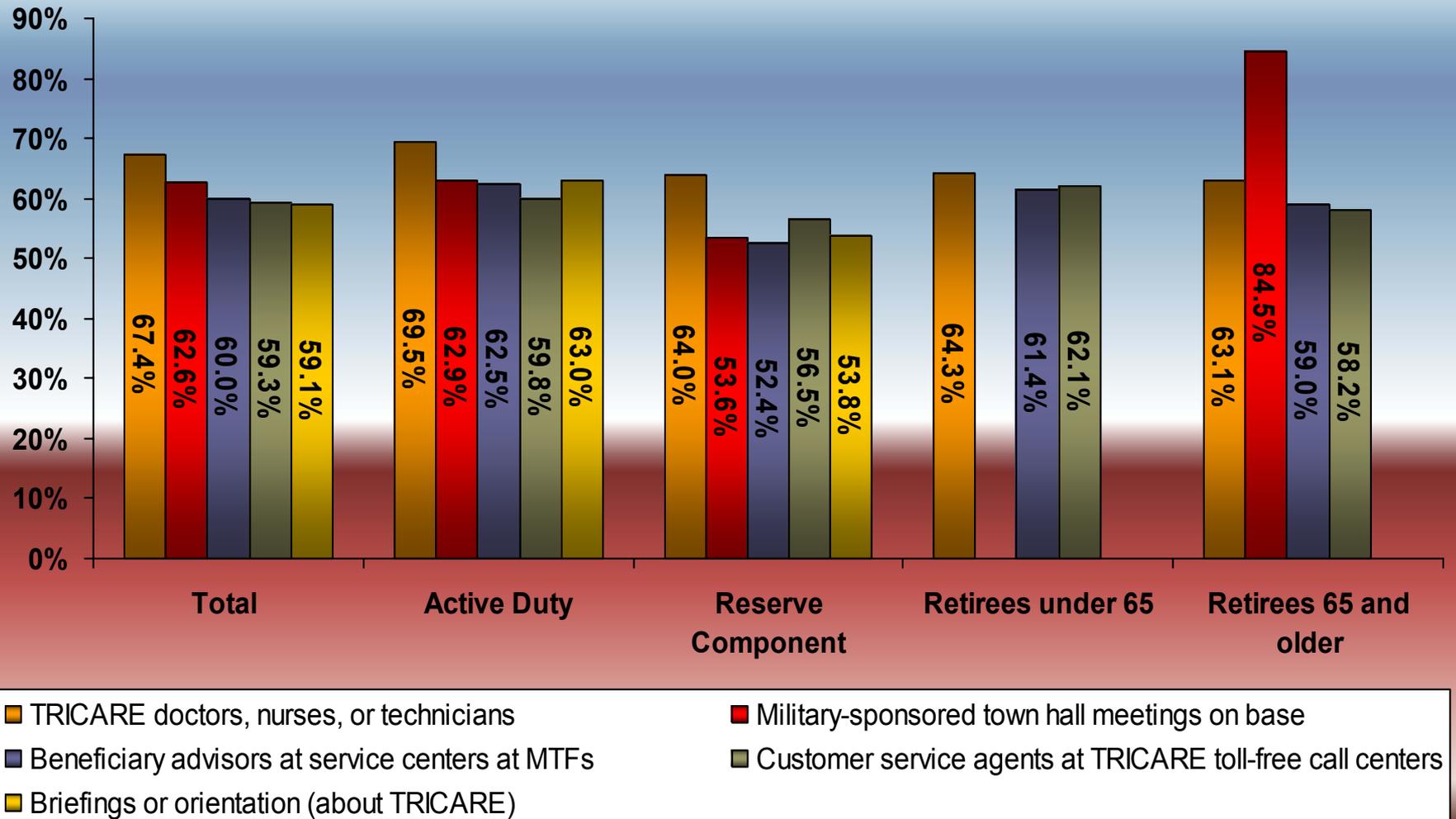


Understanding TRICARE Information

- Top 5 sources households rate as “**easy**” or “***fairly easy***” **to understand** information
 - TRICARE doctors, nurses, or technicians (67.4%)
 - Military-sponsored town hall meetings on base (62.6%)
 - Beneficiary advisors at service centers and MTFs (60.0%)
 - *Customer service agents at TRICARE toll-free call centers (59.3%)*
 - Briefings or orientation (59.1%)



How Easy Is It To Understand Information?



Note: Data are not reported for military-sponsored town hall meetings and briefings or orientation because of small sample size for Retirees (under/over 65).

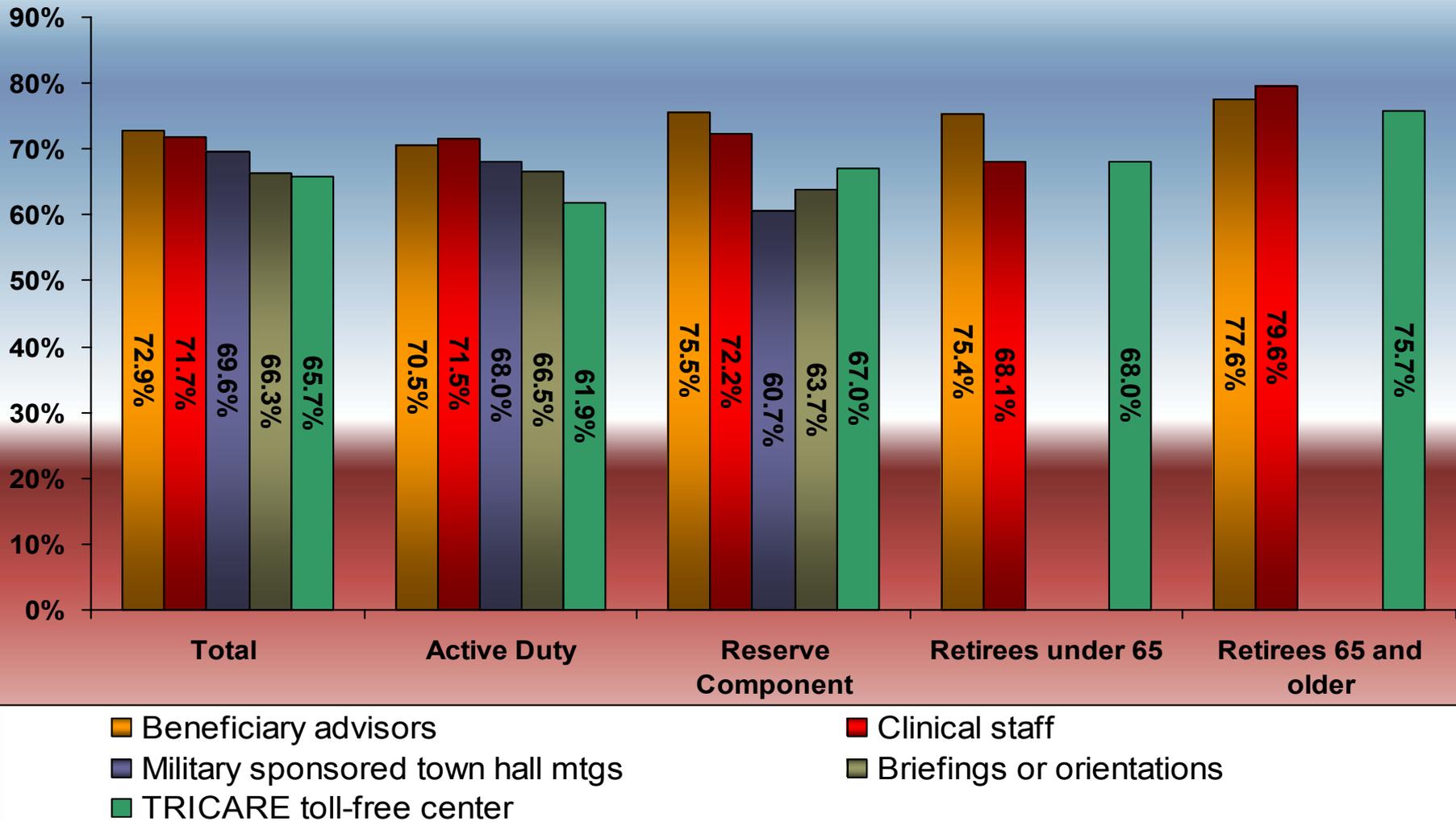


How Useful Are Sources?

- Top 5 sources households rate as “useful” information
 - Beneficiary advisory at service centers and MTFs (72.9%)
 - TRICARE doctors, nurses, or tech (71.7%)
 - Military-sponsored town hall meetings on base (69.9%)
 - Briefings or orientations (66.3%)
 - Customer service agents at a TRICARE toll-free call center (65.7%)

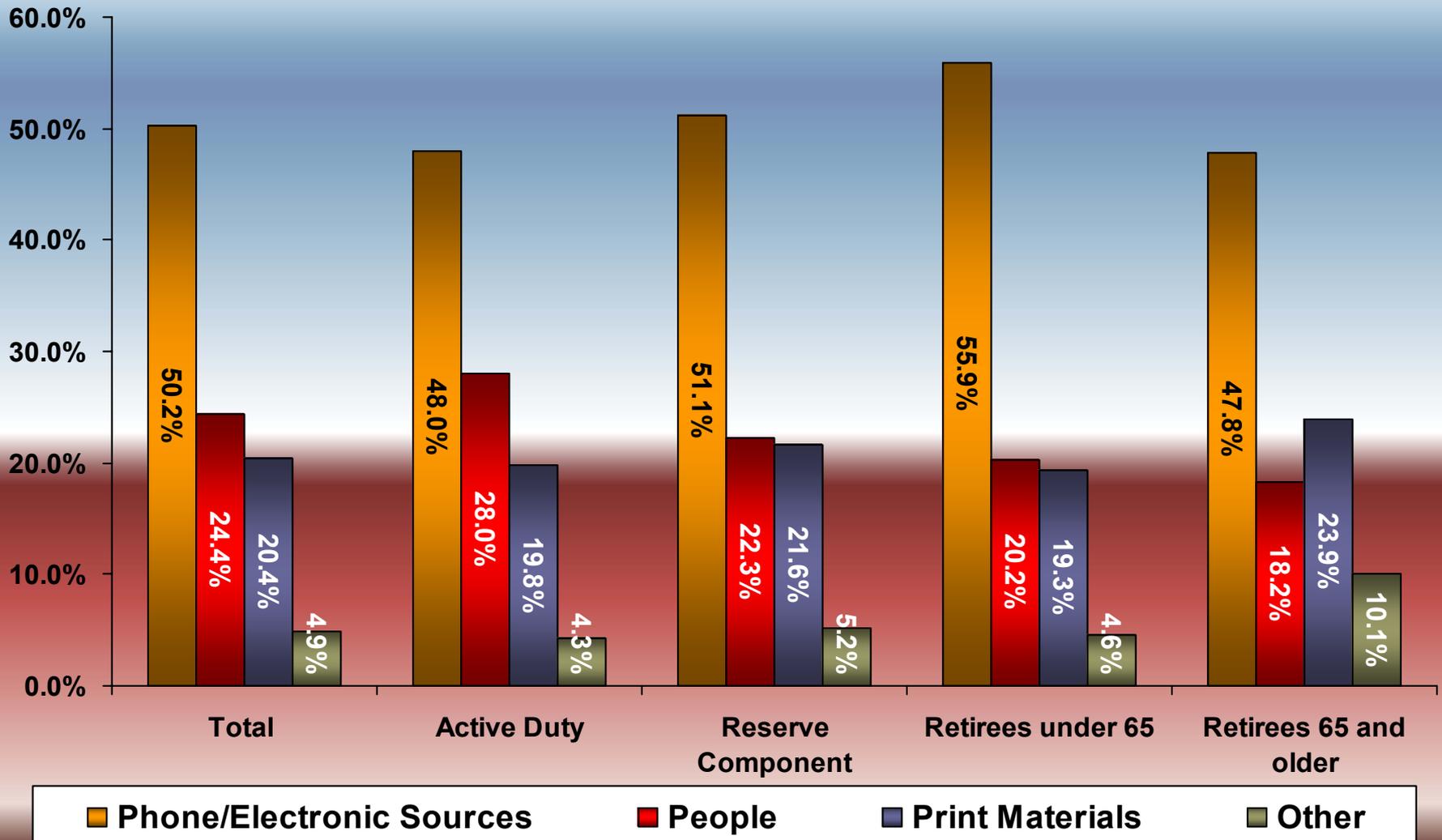


How Useful are TRICARE Information Sources?

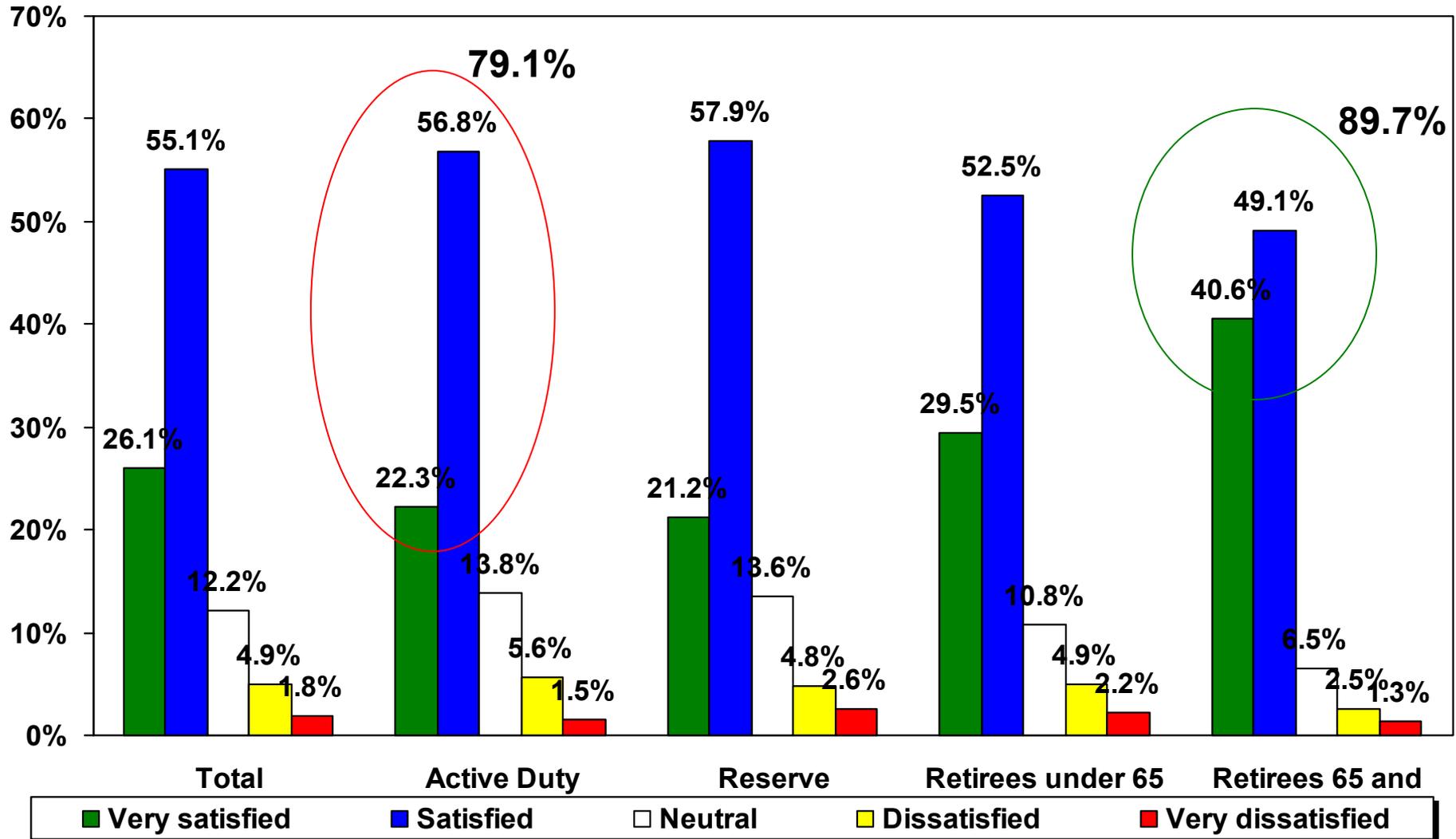




Most Difficult Sources of Information



81% of TRICARE Information Seekers are “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with Sources





Satisfaction Levels

Highest satisfaction levels among households using the following as their primary source

Primary Source	Satisfaction level
TRICARE staff at a military hospital	85.0%
Doctors or staff at a civilian hospital	84.5%
TRICARE Handbook	84.5%
TRICARE Internet sites	84.1%



Receiving TRICARE Answers

- Most preferred method to receive answers to questions
 - Telephone (28.4%)
 - Face-to-face (28.3%)
 - Mail (18.4%)
 - Internet sites (16.7)

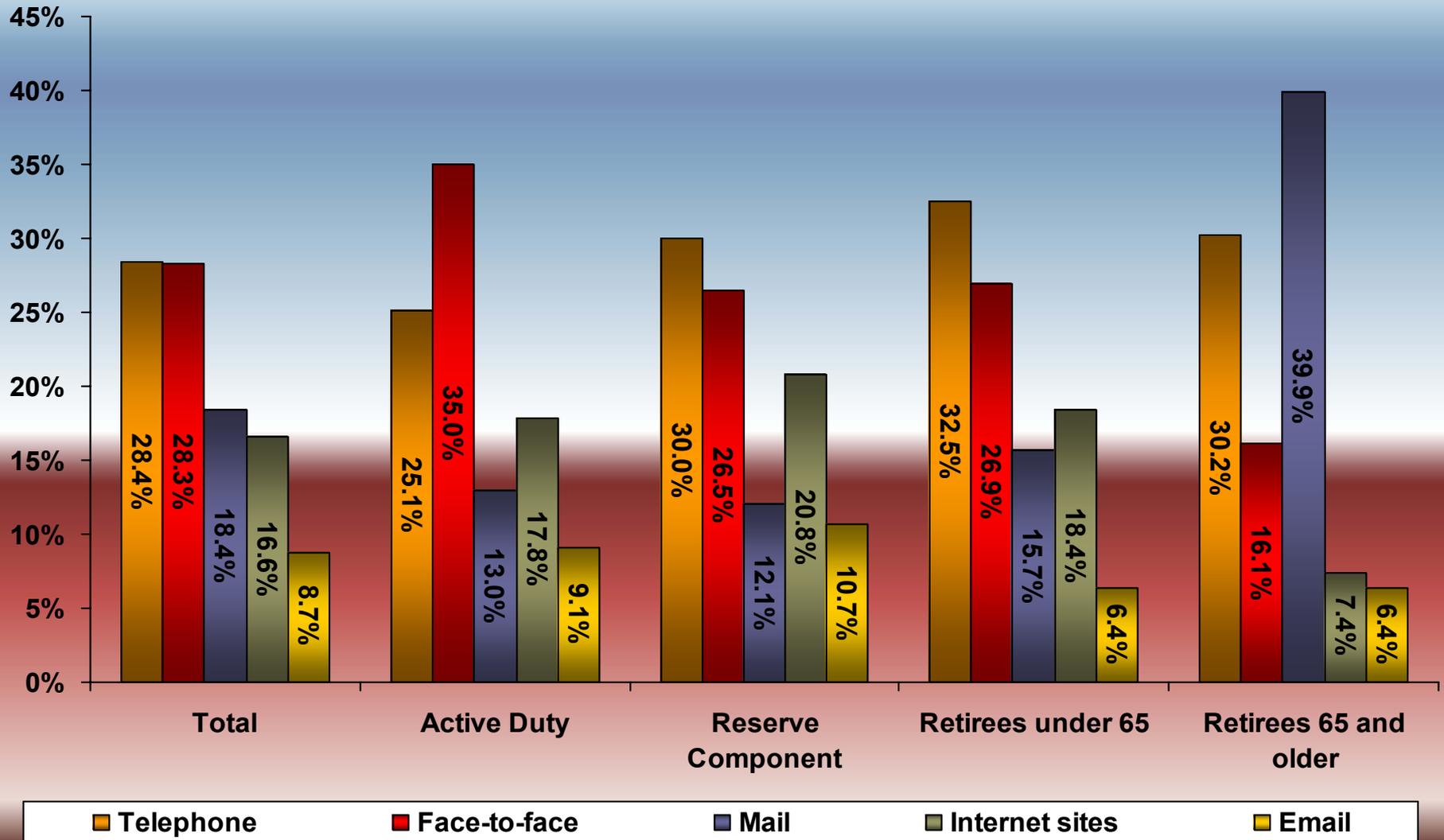


Most Preferred Method to Receive Answers

	Active Duty	Reserve component	Retirees under age 65	Retirees 65 and over
Telephone		30.0%	32.5%	
Face-to-face	35.0%			
Mail				39.9%
Email				
Internet Sites				



Most Preferred Method to Receive Answers



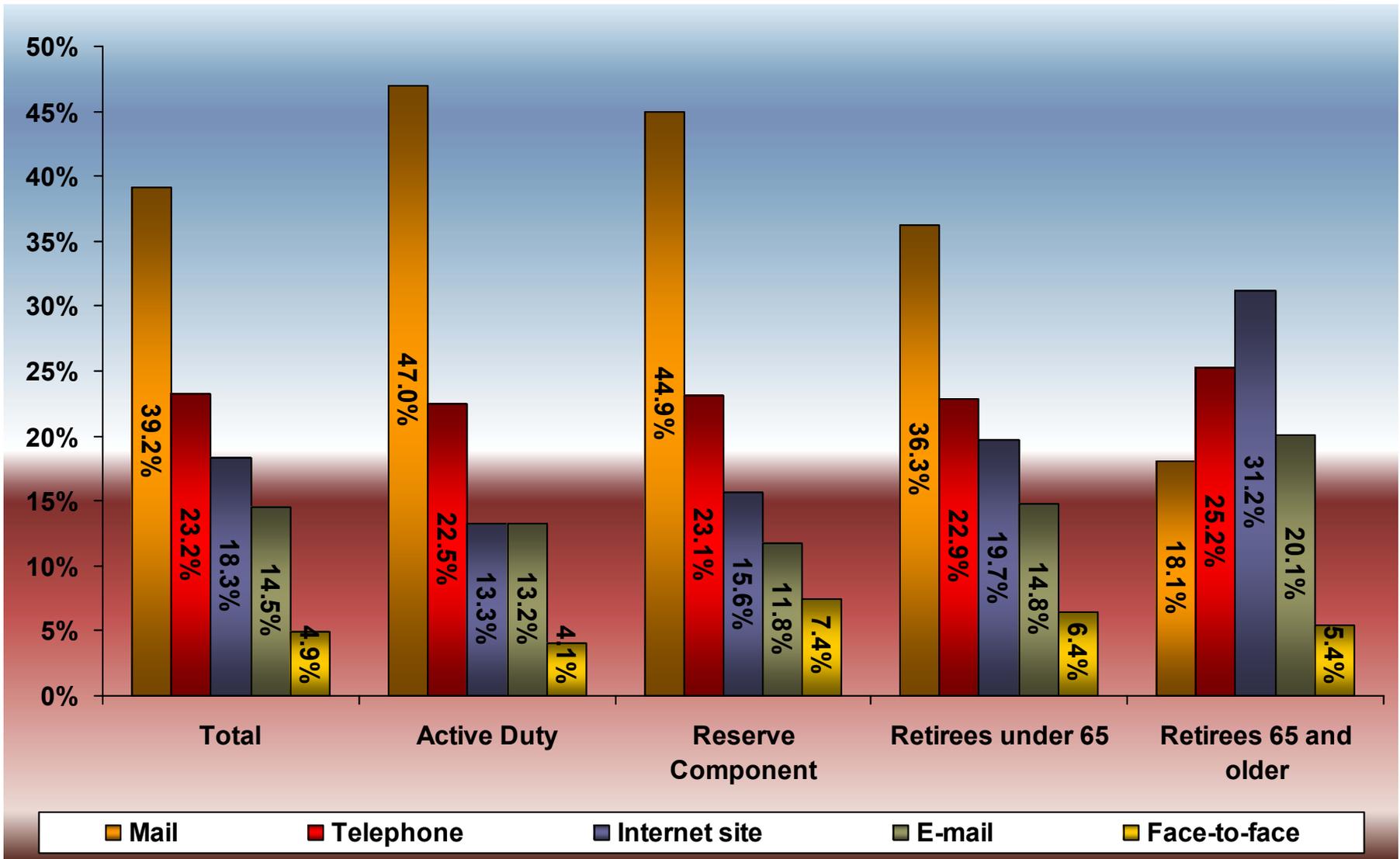


Least Preferred Method to Receive Information

	Active Duty	Reserve component	Retirees under age 65	Retirees 65 and over
Telephone				
Face-to-face				
Mail	47.0%	44.9%	36.3%	
Email				
Internet Sites				31.2%



Least Preferred Method to Receive Information

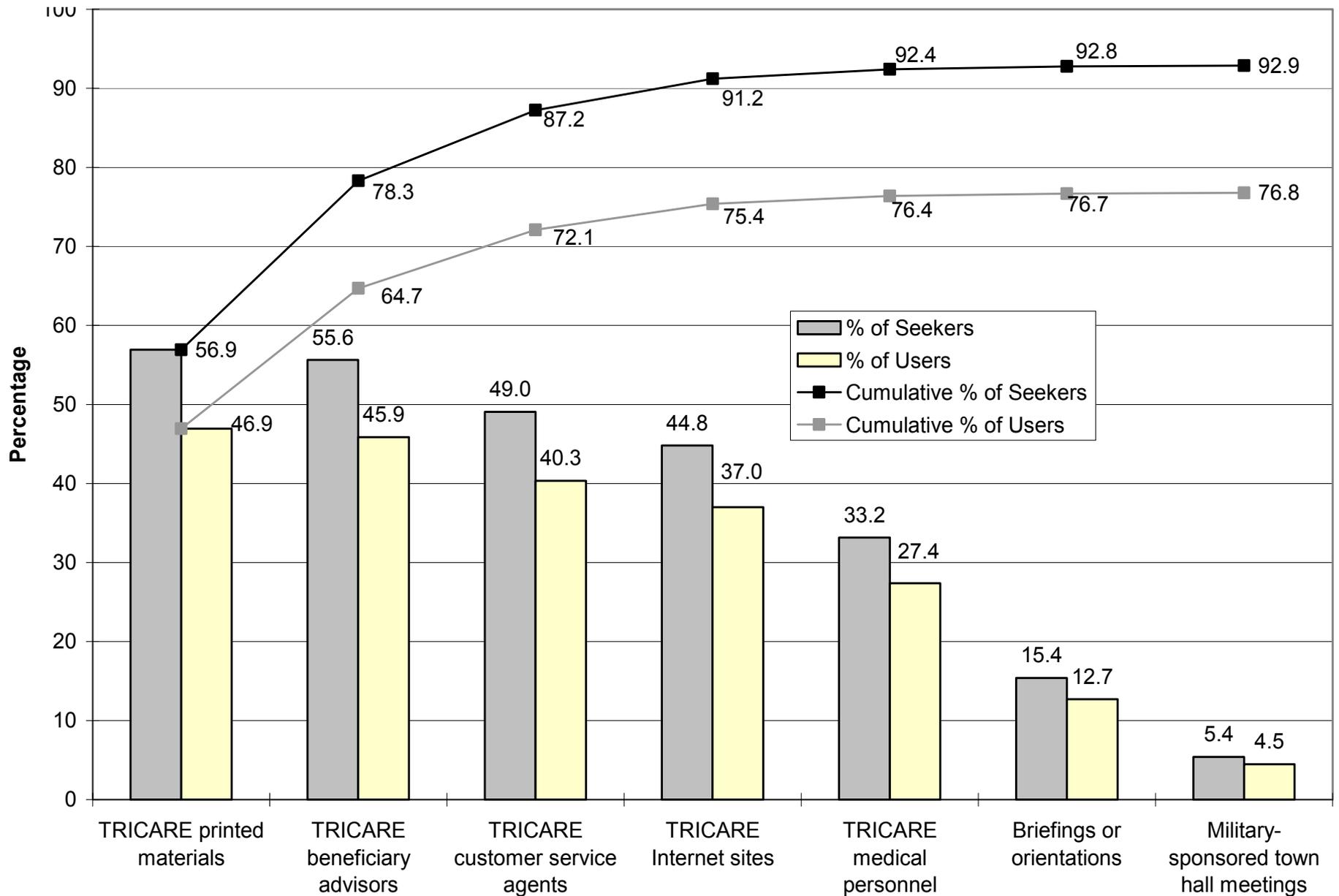




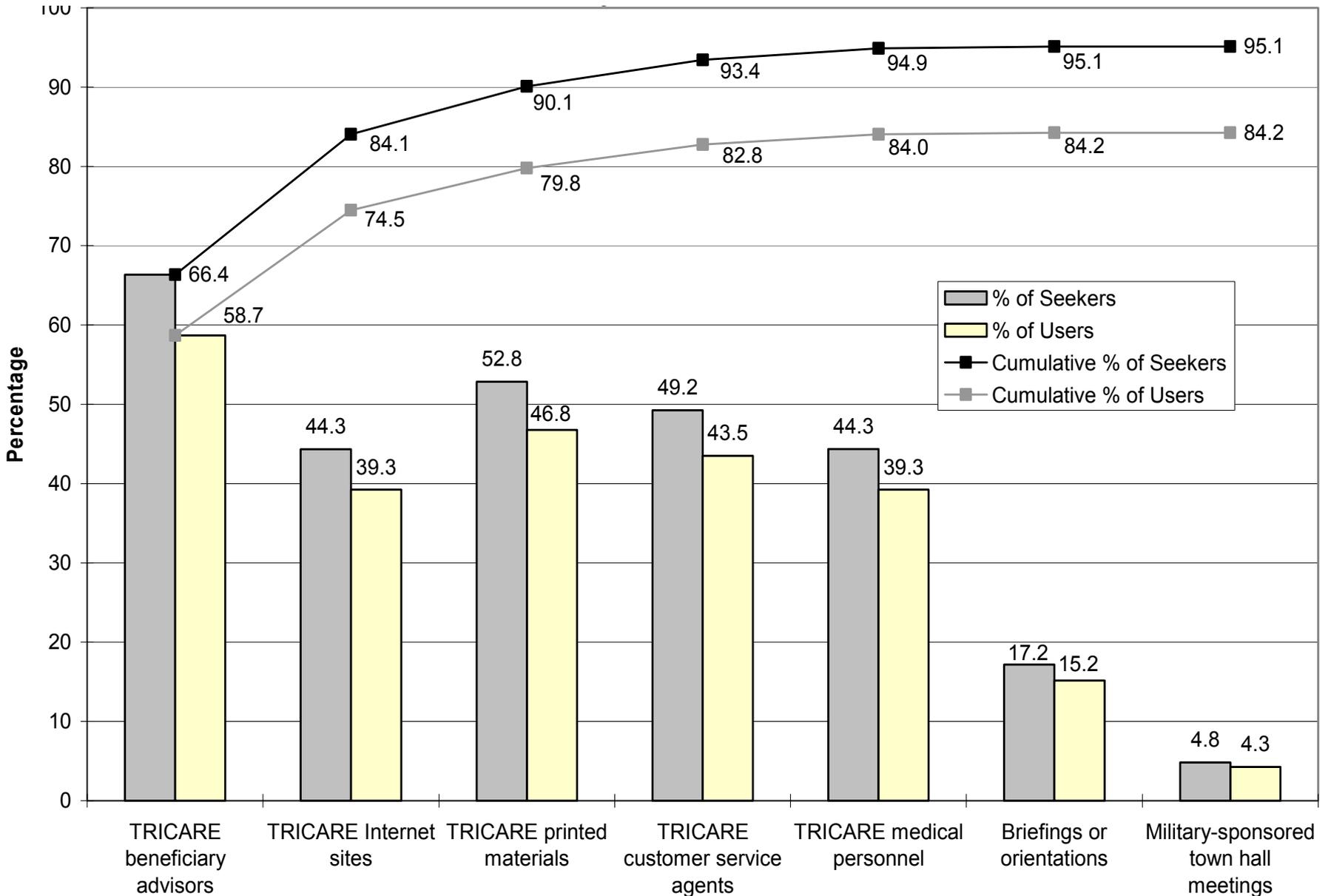
Market Reach

- Sources that can most efficiently be used to reach a targeted segment of TRICARE households

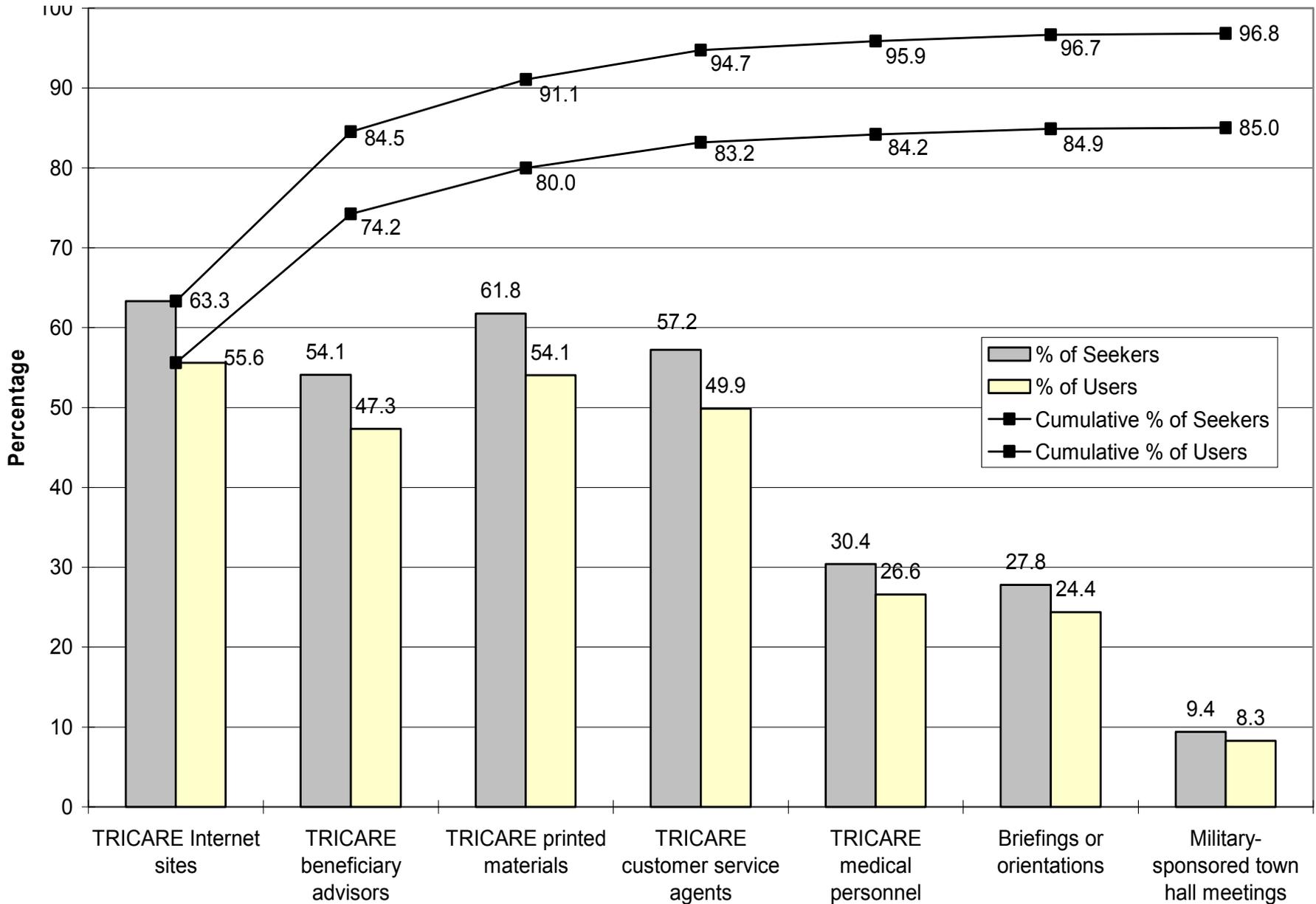
Market Reach: All Users



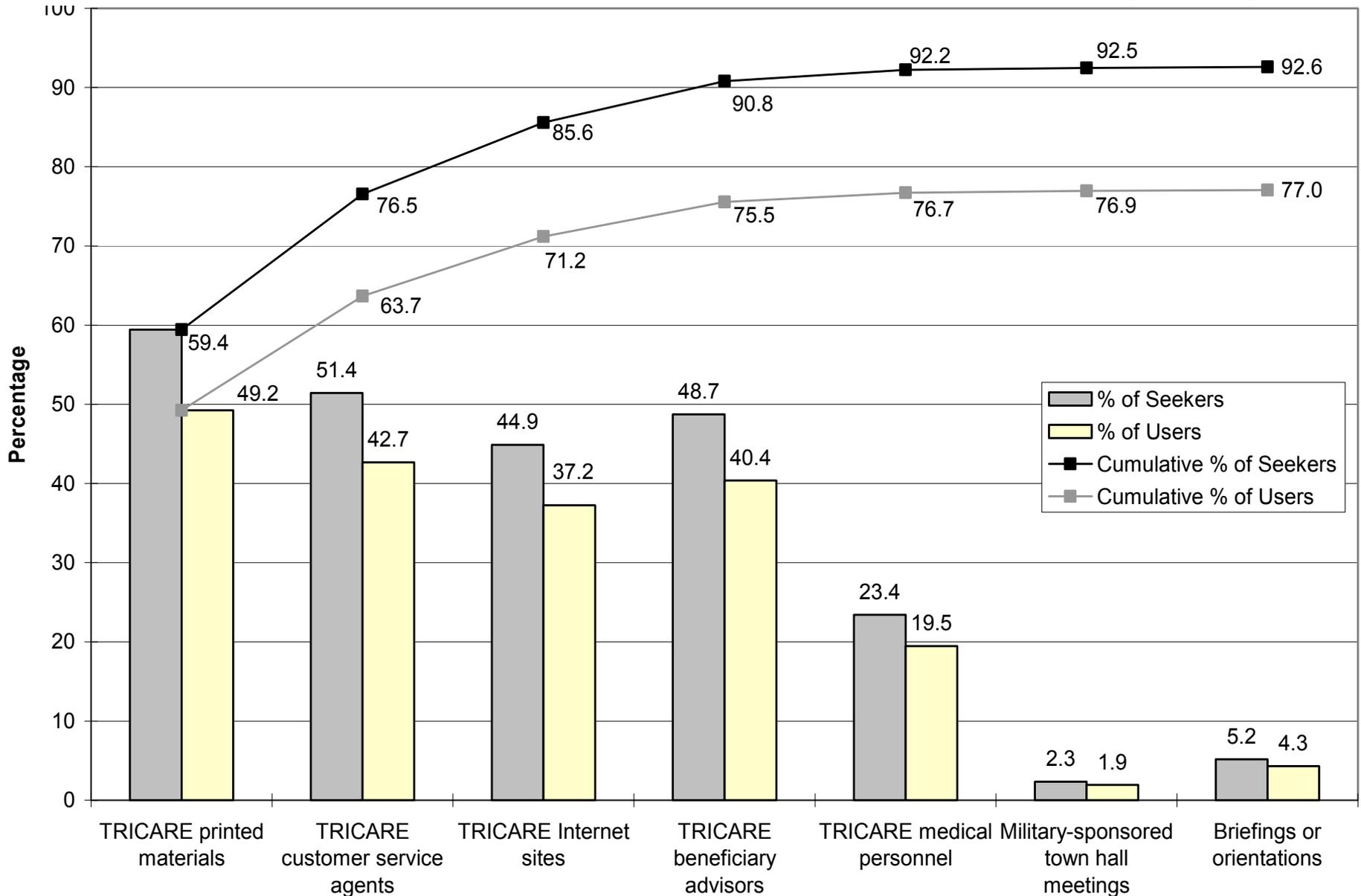
Market Reach: Active Duty Households



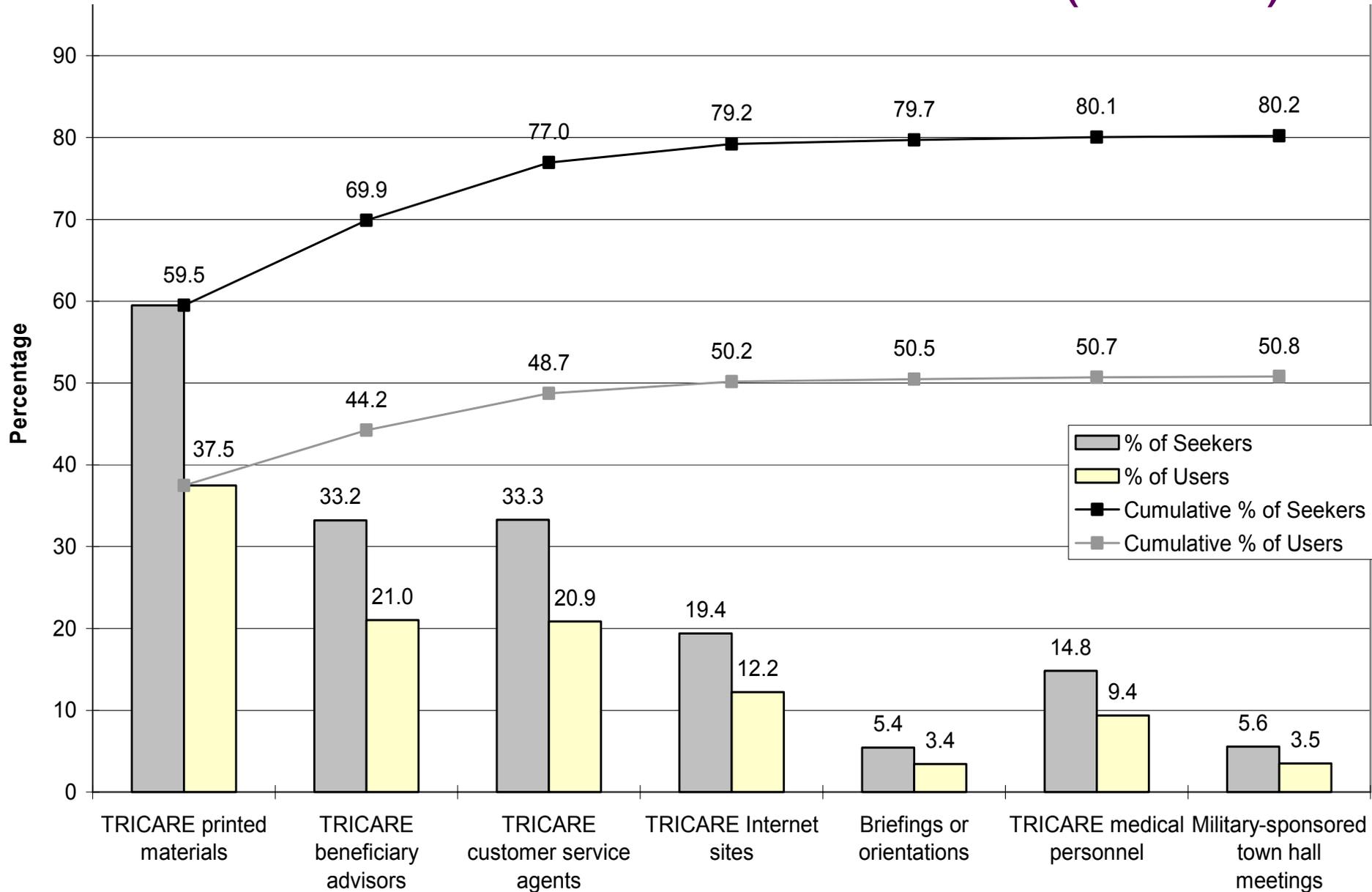
Market Reach: Reserve Component Households



Market Reach: Retiree Households (<65)



Market Reach: Retiree Households (65 & +)



Changes in TRICARE Information Awareness

- Statistically significant increases in awareness of 3 types of information sources by t-test, probability level of $p < .05$

Information Source	Aug '05	Feb '04	Change
TRICARE toll-free numbers	93.6%	93.0%	No change
Printed materials from TRICARE	93.4%	91.0%	+2.4 points
TRICARE staff	93.2%	88.5%	+4.7 points
TRICARE Internet sites	83.6%	77.2%	+6.4 points

- Increased reliance on TRICARE internet sites by both retiree groups
- Increased reliance on TRICARE staff by retirees 65 and +



Changes in Preferred TRICARE Information Sources

- No significant change for TRICARE beneficiary advisors and for TRICARE briefings and orientations

Information Source	Aug '05	Change
TRICARE Internet sites	39.9%	+4.8 points
TRICARE doctors, nurses, or technicians	33.9%	-4.8 points
Military-sponsored town hall meetings on base	4.4%	-1.9 points



Comparison of Feb '04 and Aug '05 Assessments

- TRICARE Internet sites
 - How easy it is to get information?
 - Significant increase that rated “**not easy at all**”
 - How useful is the source?
 - Significant decrease that rated “**useful**”
 - Significant increase that rated “**not useful at all**”
 - Difficult source of information to understand?
 - Significant increase that rated “**difficult**”
- Significant decrease in percentage of households that rated toll-free numbers as the most difficult source to use



Comparison of Feb '04 and Aug '05 Primary Sources

- ***Solid*** Top 4 Primary Sources
 - TRICARE beneficiary advisors at a service center or MTF
 - TRICARE Internet sites
 - TRICARE toll-free numbers
 - TRICARE doctors, nurses, or technicians at a military hospital or clinic

- ***Most information*** provided by primary source (44.2%)



Comparisons between Feb '04 and Aug '05 Satisfaction with TRICARE Information

- **High** levels of satisfaction (slightly more than 80%)
 - Significant increase in the “very satisfied” ratings for retirees under age 65
 - Slight decrease in the “very satisfied” ratings for retirees 65 and over



Comparison between Feb '04 and Aug '05 Preference Getting TRICARE Information

- Most preferred method to receive answers to questions
 - Significant increases in households using the telephone

- Least preferred method to receive answers to questions
 - Significant decrease in households using the mail